

## Food and Nutrition Service, USDA

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the household shall be subject to the certification period requirements in § 273.10(f)(4). If the State agency does not adopt this option, any household that moves off the reservation shall have its certification period shortened. A household continuing to be subject to monthly reporting shall not have its certification period shortened to less than six months. A household becoming subject to change reporting shall not have its certification period end any earlier than the month following the month in which the State agency determines that the certification period shall be shortened.

(3) *Benefit determination for missing reports.* The State agency shall not delay, reduce, or suspend the allotment of a household that fails to submit a report by the issuance date.

(4) *Reinstatement.* If a household is terminated for failing to submit a monthly report, the household shall be reinstated without being required to submit a new application if a monthly report is submitted no later than the last day of the month following the month the household was terminated.

(5) *Notices.* (i) All notices regarding changes in a household's benefits shall meet the definition of adequate notice as defined in § 271.2 of this chapter.

(ii) If a household fails to file a monthly report by the specified filing date, the State agency shall notify the household within five days of the filing date:

(A) That the monthly report is either overdue or incomplete;

(B) What the household must do to complete the form;

(C) If any verification is missing;

(D) That the Social Security number of a new member must be reported, if the household has reported a new member but not the new member's Social Security number;

(E) What the extended filing date is;

(F) That the State agency will assist the household in completing the report; and

(G) That the household's benefits will be issued based on the previous month's submitted report without regard to any changes in the household's circumstances if the missing report is not submitted.

(iii) Simultaneously with the issuance, the State agency shall notify a household, if its report has not been received, that the benefits being provided are based on the previous month's submitted report and that this benefit does not reflect any changes in the household's circumstances. This notice shall also advise the household that, if a complete report is not filed timely, the household will be terminated.

(iv) If the household is terminated, the State agency shall send the notice so the household receives it no later than the date benefits would have been received. This notice shall advise the household of its right to reinstatement if a complete monthly report is submitted by the end of the month following termination.

(6) *Supplements and claims.* If the household submits the missing monthly report after the issuance date but in the issuance month, the State agency shall provide the household with a supplement, if warranted. If the household submits the missing monthly report after the issuance date or the State agency becomes aware of a change that would have decreased benefits in some other manner, the State agency shall file a claim for any benefits overissued.

[48 FR 54965, Dec. 8, 1983]

EDITORIAL NOTE: For FEDERAL REGISTER citations affecting § 273.21, see the List of CFR Sections Affected, which appears in the Finding Aids section of the printed volume and on GPO Access.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 65 FR 70211, Nov. 21, 2000, in § 273.21, paragraph (a)(3) was removed and paragraph (a)(4) was redesignated as paragraph (a)(3), paragraph (j)(1)(vii)(A) was amended by removing the number "22" at the end of the second sentence and adding in its place the number "18", paragraph (t)(2) was removed and paragraphs (t)(3) through (t)(6) were redesignated as paragraphs (t)(2) through (t)(5), effective January 20, 2001.

### § 273.22 Optional workfare program.

(a) *General.* This section contains rules which are to be followed in operating a Food Stamp Workfare Program. Under this program, nonexempt food stamp recipients may be required to perform work in a public service capacity as a condition of eligibility to receive the coupon allotment to which

their household is normally entitled. The primary goal of workfare is to improve employability and enable individuals to move into regular employment.

(b) *Program administration.* (1) A food stamp workfare program may be operated as part of a State's employment and training program, required in § 273.7(f) or may be operated independent of such a program. If the workfare program is part of the State's employment and training program it shall be included as a component in the State's employment and training plan in accordance with the requirements of § 273.7(c). If it is operated independent of the E&T program, the State must submit a workfare plan to FNS for its approval in accordance with the requirements of this section. For the purpose of this section, a political subdivision is any local government, including, but not limited to, any county, city, town or parish. A State agency may implement a workfare program statewide or in only some areas of the State. The areas of operation must be identified in the State workfare or employment and training plan.

(2) Political subdivisions are encouraged, but not required, to submit their plans to FNS through their respective State agencies. At a minimum, however, plans shall be submitted to the State agencies concurrent with their submission to FNS. Workfare plans and subsequent amendments shall not be implemented prior to their approval by FNS.

(3) When a State agency chooses to sponsor a workfare program by submitting a plan to FNS, it shall incorporate the approved plan into its State Plan of Operations. When a political subdivision chooses to sponsor a workfare program by submitting a plan to FNS, the State agency shall be responsible as a facilitator in the administration of the program by disbursing Federal funding and meeting the requirements identified in paragraph (d) of this section. Upon notification that FNS has approved a workfare plan submitted by a political subdivision in its State, the State agency shall append that political subdivision's workfare plan to its own State Plan of Operations.

(4) The operating agency is that administrative organization which has been identified in the workfare plan as being responsible for establishing job sites, assigning eligible recipients to the job sites, and meeting the requirements of this section. The operating agency may be any public or private, nonprofit organization. The State agency or political subdivision which submitted the workfare plan shall be responsible for monitoring the operating agency's compliance with the requirements of this section or of the workfare plan. The Secretary may suspend or terminate some or all workfare program funding, or withdraw approval of the workfare program from the State agency or political subdivision which submitted the workfare plan upon finding that that State agency or political subdivision, or their respective operating agencies have failed to comply with the requirements of this section or of the workfare plan.

(5) State agencies or other political subdivisions shall describe in detail in the plan how the political subdivision, working with the State agency and any other cooperating agencies that may be involved in the program, shall fulfill the provisions of this section. The plan shall include workload projections, staffing plans, interagency communication plans, and specific operational agreements developed by the agencies involved. The plan shall be a one-time submittal, with amendments submitted as needed to cover any changes in the workfare program as they occur.

(6) State agencies or political subdivisions submitting a workfare plan shall submit with the plan an operating budget covering the period from the initiation of the workfare program's implementation schedule to the close of the Federal fiscal year. In addition, an estimate of the cost for one full year of operation shall be submitted together with the workfare plan. For subsequent fiscal years, the workfare program budget shall be included in the State agency's budget.

(7) If workfare plans are submitted by more than one political subdivision, each representing the same population (such as a city within a county), the Department shall determine which political subdivision will have its plan

approved. Under no circumstances shall a food stamp recipient be subject to more than one food stamp workfare program. If a political subdivision chooses to operate a workfare program and represents a population which is already, at least in part, subject to a food stamp workfare program administered by another political subdivision, it must establish in its workfare plan how food stamp recipients will not be subject to more than one food stamp workfare program.

(c) *Operating agency responsibilities.* (1) The operating agency, as designated by the State agency or other political subdivision which submits a plan, shall be responsible for establishing and monitoring job sites, interviewing and assessing eligible recipients, assigning eligible recipients to appropriate job sites, monitoring participant compliance, making initial determinations of good cause for household noncompliance, and otherwise meeting the requirements of this section.

(2) *Establishment of job sites.* Workfare job slots may only be located in public or private, nonprofit agencies. Contractual agreements must be established between the operating agency and organizations providing jobs which include but are not limited to designation of the slots available and designation of responsibility for provision of benefits, if any are required, to the workfare participant.

(3) *Notifying State agency of noncompliance.* The operating agency shall notify the State agency of noncompliance by a household with a workfare obligation when it has determined that the household did not have good cause for the non-compliance. This notification shall occur within five days of such determination so that the State agency may make a final determination as provided in paragraph (d)(4) of this section.

(4) *Notifications.* Notices shall be established to be used as follows: (i) For the State agency to notify the operating agency of workfare-eligible households. Included in this notice shall be the case name, case number, names of workfare-eligible household members, address of the household, certification period, and indication of any part-time work. If the State agency is calculating the hours of obligation,

this shall also be included in this notice. If the operating agency is computing the hours to be worked, the monthly allotment shall be included.

(ii) For operating agencies to notify the workfare participant of where and when the participant is to report, to whom the participant is to report, a brief description of duties for the particular placement, and the number of hours to be worked.

(iii) For operating agencies to notify the State agency of failure by a household to meet its workfare obligation.

(5) *Recordkeeping requirements.* (i) Files must be maintained which record activity by workfare participants. At a minimum, these records must contain job sites and hours assigned, hours completed, and communications with the State agency and job sites.

(ii) Program records shall be maintained in an orderly fashion, for audit and review purposes, for a period of 3 years from the month of origin of each record. Fiscal records and accountable documents shall be retained for 3 years from the date of fiscal or administrative closure of the workfare program. Fiscal closure, as used in this paragraph, means that workfare program obligations for or against the Federal government have been liquidated. Administrative closure, as used in this paragraph, means that the operating agency or Federal government has determined and documented that no further action to liquidate the workfare program obligation is appropriate. Fiscal records and accountable records shall be kept in a manner which will permit verification of direct monthly reimbursements to recipients, in accordance with paragraph (f)(4) of this section.

(6) *Reporting requirements.* The operating agency shall be responsible for providing information needed by the State agency to fulfill the reporting requirements stated in paragraph (d)(6) of this section.

(7) *Disclosure.* The provisions of § 272.1(c) restricting the use and disclosure of information obtained from food stamp households shall be applicable to the administration of the workfare program.

(8) *Grievance procedures.* The operating agency may establish a system

for handling complaints filed by workfare participants regarding their working conditions, perceived non-compliance by job sites with the provisions of this section, or any other area related to their workfare participation. This procedure need not handle complaints that can be pursued through a fair hearing nor may choosing not to use this procedure preclude a participant from requesting a fair hearing. If established, a description of this system shall be included in the workfare plan. Complaints which have not been resolved through this system and those against the operating agency shall be forwarded to the State agency and handled by the State agency according to the provisions of § 271.6. Workfare participants shall be informed of the grievance procedure.

(d) *State agency responsibilities.* (1) If a political subdivision chooses to operate a workfare program, the State agency shall cooperate with the political subdivision in developing a plan. This includes providing caseload and cost estimates, as well as being available for consultation on the design of the administrative structure and interagency communications for the program. The State agency may decide what its workfare policy shall be in three areas. They are the definition of reimbursable expenses, the definition of good cause, and the sanctioning of members of divided households (paragraphs (f)(4), (f)(5), and (f)(6)(ii) of this section, respectively). The State agency may either accept the policies contained in these paragraphs or determine its own policies, subject to the requirements of section 20 of the Food Stamp Act of 1977, as amended, and the approval of FNS. Until the Food and Nutrition Service approves any alternate policies of the State agency, the provisions of paragraphs (f)(4), (f)(5), and (f)(6)(ii) of this section shall apply.

(2) The State agency shall determine at certification or recertification which household members are eligible for the workfare program and inform the household representative of the nature of the program and of the penalties for noncompliance. If the State agency is not the operating agency, each member of a household who is subject to workfare under paragraph

(e)(1) of this section shall be referred to the organization which is the operating agency. The information identified in paragraph (c)(4)(i) of this section shall be forwarded to the operating agency within 5 days after the date of household certification. Computation of hours to be worked may be delegated to the operating agency.

(3) The State agency shall inform the household and the operating agency of the effect of any changes in a household's circumstances on the household's workfare obligation. This includes changes in benefit levels or workfare eligibility.

(4) Upon notification by the operating agency that a participant has failed to comply with the workfare requirement without good cause, the State agency shall make a final determination as to whether or not such failure occurred and whether there was good cause for any such failure. If the State agency determines that the participant did not have good cause for noncompliance, a sanction shall be processed as provided in paragraph (f)(6) of this section. The State agency shall immediately inform the operating agency of the months during which the sanction shall apply.

(5) The State agency shall maintain in each household's casefile all workfare-related forms used by the State agency in meeting the requirements of this section.

(6) The State agency shall submit quarterly reports to FNS within 45 days of the end of each quarter identifying for that quarter for that State:

(i) The number of households referred to the operating agency as containing workfare-eligible recipients. A household shall be counted as referred each time it is referred to the operating agency.

(ii) The number of households assigned to jobs each month by the operating agency.

(iii) The number of individuals assigned to jobs each month by the operating agency.

(iv) The total number of hours worked by participants.

(v) The number of households against which sanctions were applied. A household being sanctioned over two quarters should only be reported as sanctioned for the earlier quarter.

(7) The State agency may, at its option, assume responsibility for monitoring all workfare programs in its State to assure that there is compliance with this section and with the plan submitted and approved by FNS. Should the State agency assume this responsibility, it would act as agent for FNS which is ultimately responsible for ensuring such compliance. Should the State agency determine that non-compliance exists, it may withhold funding until compliance is achieved or FNS directs otherwise. FNS shall be notified prior to the withholding of funds of the circumstances leading to that action. At a minimum, the State agency shall perform onsite reviews of each workfare program once within six months of the program's implementation and then in accordance with the Management Evaluation review schedule for that program area.

(e) *Household responsibilities*—(1) *Persons subject to workfare.* Household members subject to the work registration requirements as provided in § 273.7(a) shall also be subject to the workfare requirements. In addition:

(i) Those recipients exempt from work registration requirements due to being subject to the work incentive program (WIN) under title IV of the Social Security Act shall be subject to workfare if they are currently involved less than 20 hours a week in WIN. Those recipients involved 20 hours a week or more may be subject to workfare at the option of the political subdivision.

(ii) Those recipients exempt from work registration requirements due to the application for or receipt of unemployment compensation shall be subject to workfare requirements; and

(iii) Those recipients exempt from work registration requirements due to being a parent or other household member responsible for the care of a dependent child between the ages of six and twelve shall be subject to workfare requirements. If the child has its sixth birthday within a certification period, the individual responsible for the care

of the child shall be subject to the workfare requirement as part of the next scheduled recertification process, unless the individual qualifies for another exemption.

(2) *Household obligation.* The maximum total number of hours of work required of a household each month shall be determined by dividing the household's coupon allotment by the Federal or State minimum wage, whichever is higher. Fractions of hours of obligation may be rounded down. The household's hours of obligation for any given month may not be carried over into another month except when the household wishes to end a disqualification due to noncompliance with workfare in accordance with paragraph (f)(8) of this section.

(f) *Other program requirements*—(1) *Priority placements.* The State agency or political subdivision submitting the plan shall indicate in the plan how it will determine priority for placement at job sites when the number of eligible participants is greater than the number of available positions at job sites.

(2) *Conditions of employment.* (i) Recipients may be required to work up to, but not to exceed, 30 hours per week. In addition, the total number of hours worked by a recipient under workfare together with any other hours worked in any other compensated capacity, including hours of participation in a WIN training program, by such recipient on a regular or predictable part-time basis, shall not exceed thirty hours a week. With the recipient's consent, the hours to be worked may be scheduled in such a manner that more than thirty hours are worked in one week, as long as the total for that month does not exceed the weekly average of thirty hours a week.

(ii) No participant shall be required to work more than eight hours on any given day, except that with the recipient's consent, more than eight hours may be scheduled.

(iii) No participant shall be required to accept an offer of workfare employment if such employment fails to meet the criteria established in § 273.7(i)(1) (iii) and (iv); and § 273.7(i)(2) (i), (ii), (iv), and (v).

(iv) If the workfare participant is unable to report for job scheduling, to appear for scheduled workfare employment, or to complete the entire workfare obligation due to compliance with Unemployment Insurance requirements, the additional work requirements established in § 273.7(e) (1), (2), (3), or (4), or the job search requirements established in § 273.7(f), such inability shall not be considered a refusal to accept workfare employment. If the workfare participant informs the operating agency of the time conflict, the operating agency shall, if possible, reschedule the missed activity. If such rescheduling cannot be completed before the end of the month, this shall not be cause for disqualification.

(v) The operating agency shall assure that all persons employed in workfare jobs receive job-related benefits at the same levels and to the same extent as similar non-workfare employees. These shall be benefits related to the actual work being performed, such as workers' compensation, and not to the employment by a particular agency, such as health benefits. Of those benefits required to be offered, any elective benefit which requires a cash contribution by the participant shall be optional at the discretion of the participant.

(vi) All persons employed in workfare jobs shall be assured by the operating agency of working conditions provided other employees similarly employed.

(vii) The provisions of section 2(a)(3) of the Service Contract Act of 1965 (Pub. L. 89-286), relating to health and safety conditions, shall apply to the workfare program.

(viii) Operating agencies shall not provide work to a workfare participant which has the effect of replacing or preventing the employment of an individual not participating in the workfare program. Vacancies, due to hiring freezes, terminations, or layoffs, shall not be filled by a workfare participant unless it can be demonstrated that such vacancies are a result of insufficient funds to sustain former staff levels.

(ix) The workfare jobs shall in no way infringe upon the promotional opportunities which would otherwise be available to regular employees.

(x) Workfare jobs shall not be related in any way to political or partisan activities.

(xi) Workfare assignments should, to the greatest extent possible, take into consideration previous training, experience, and skills of a participant.

(xii) The cost of workers' compensation or comparable protection provided to workfare participants by the State agency, political subdivision, or operating agency is a matchable cost under paragraph (g) of this section. Whether or not this coverage is provided, in no case is the Federal government the employer in these workfare programs (unless a Federal agency is the job site), and therefore, USDA does not assume liability for any injury to or death of a workfare participant while on the job.

(xiii) The nondiscrimination requirement provided in § 272.6(a) shall apply to all agencies involved in the workfare program.

(3) *Job search period.* The operating agency may establish a job search period of up to 30 days following certification prior to making a workfare assignment during which the potential participant is expected to look for a job. This period may only be established at household certification, not at recertification. The potential participant would not be subject to any job search requirements beyond those required under § 273.7 during this time.

(4) *Participant reimbursement.* Participants shall be reimbursed by the operating agency for transportation and other costs that are reasonably necessary and directly related to participation in the program. These other costs may include the cost of child care, or the cost of personal safety items or equipment required for performance of work if these items are also purchased by regular employees. These other costs shall not include the cost of meals away from home. No participant cost which has been reimbursed under a workfare program operated under Title IV of the Social Security Act or any other workfare program shall be reimbursed under the food stamp workfare program. Only reimbursement of participant costs which are up to but not in excess of \$25 per month for any participant will be

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subject to Federal cost sharing as provided in paragraph (g)(1) of this section. Child care costs which are reimbursed may not be claimed as expenses and used in calculating the child care deduction for determining household benefits. Pursuant to paragraph (d)(1) of this section, a State agency may decide what its reimbursement policy shall be.

(5) *Good cause.* For the purpose of this section, unless a State agency has determined its good cause policy pursuant to paragraph (d)(1) of this section, good cause shall include:

(i) Circumstances beyond a household member's control, such as, but not limited to: Illness; the illness or incapacitation of another household member requiring the presence of the workfare participant; a household emergency; or the lack of transportation when transportation is not provided by the operating agency;

(ii) Necessity for a parent or other responsible household member to care for a child between the age of six and 12 because adequate child care is not otherwise available;

(iii) Becoming exempt from the workfare eligibility requirements under the terms established in paragraph (e)(1) of this section.

(iv) Household moving out of the area of the workfare project.

(v) Instances where cost of transportation and other costs have exceeded \$25 per month and are not being reimbursed by the operating agency.

(6) *Failure to comply.* (i) Where a workfare participant has been determined by the State agency to have failed or refused without good cause to comply with the requirements of this section, the entire household shall be ineligible to participate. Such ineligibility shall continue until either the household meets the provisions of paragraph (f)(8) of this section or for 2 consecutive months, whichever occurs earlier. Within 10 days after receiving notification of the household's failure to comply with the requirements of this section, the State agency shall, if it determines that there is not good cause for the noncompliance, provide the household with a notice of adverse action, as specified in §273.13. Such notification shall contain the proposed pe-

riod of disqualification and shall specify the terms and conditions on which disqualification can be ended. Information shall also be included with the notification on the procedures and requirements contained in paragraph (f)(8) of this section. The disqualification period shall begin with the first month following the expiration of the adverse notice period, or following a fair hearing decision if a fair hearing is requested, in which the household would normally have received benefits. A household member shall not be required to perform work at a job site when the household is no longer receiving benefits unless the household has chosen to meet the conditions for ending disqualification specified in paragraph (f)(8) of this section. Until the disqualification is actually invoked, the household, if otherwise eligible, will continue to have a workfare obligation.

(ii) Should a household have two or more consecutive months of noncompliance while being certified for food stamps, the total corresponding months of sanction shall be a cumulative total; that is, two months of noncompliance shall entail a four-month sanction. Should a household which has been determined to be noncompliant without good cause split into more than one household, the sanction shall follow all the members of the household at the time of the noncompliance. None of those household members shall be eligible to participate in the food stamp program for the length of the sanction beginning at the point when the sanction can be placed against any one of them.

(iii) If a sanctioned household member joins another food stamp household, that household's eligibility and benefit level shall be determined as follows:

(A) *Income, resources, and deductible expenses.* The income and resources of the household member(s) disqualified for noncompliance with workfare shall count in their entirety, and the entire household's allowable earned income standard, medical, dependent care and excess shelter deductions shall apply to the remaining household members.

(B) *Eligibility and benefit level.* An individual disqualified for noncompliance

with workfare shall not be included when determining the household's size for the purpose of assigning a benefit level to the household or of comparing the household's monthly income with income eligibility standards. The State agency shall ensure that no household's coupon allotment is increased as a result of the disqualification of one or more household member for workfare noncompliance.

(7) *Fair hearings.* Each household has a right to a fair hearing to appeal a denial or termination of benefits due to a State agency determination of failure to comply with the requirements of this section. The fair hearing requirements provided in § 273.15 shall apply. If a fair hearing is scheduled, the operating agency shall be available to participate in the hearing. The State agency shall provide the operating agency sufficient advance notice to permit the attendance of an operating agency representative.

(8) *Ending disqualification.* Following the end of the 2-month disqualification period for noncompliance with the workfare provisions of this section, a household may resume participation in the program if it applies again and is determined eligible. Eligibility may be reestablished during a disqualification period and the household shall (if it makes application and is determined otherwise eligible) be permitted to resume participation if the member who failed to comply or any other workfare-eligible member of the household satisfies all outstanding workfare obligations. A workfare position shall be made available for a household which wishes to end disqualification in this manner.

(9) *Benefit overissuances.* If a benefit overissuance is discovered for a month or months in which a participant has already performed a workfare or work component requirement, the State agency shall follow claim recovery procedures specified below.

(i) If the person who performed the work is still subject to a work obligation, the State shall determine how many extra hours were worked because of the improper benefit. The participant should be credited that number of hours toward future work obligations.

(ii) If a workfare or work component requirement does not continue, the State agency shall determine whether the overissuance was the result of an intentional program violation, an inadvertent household error, or a State agency error. For an intentional program violation a claim should be established for the entire amount of the overissuance. If the overissuance was caused by an inadvertent household error or State agency error, the State agency shall determine whether the number of hours worked in workfare are more than the number which could have been assigned had the proper benefit level been used in calculating the number of hours to work. A claim shall be established for the amount of the overissuance not "worked off," if any. If the hours worked equal the amount of hours calculated by dividing the overissuance by the minimum wage, no claim shall be established. No credit for future work requirements shall be given.

(g) *Federal financial participation—(1) Administrative costs.* Fifty percent of all administrative costs incurred by State agencies or political subdivisions in operating a workfare program shall be funded by the Federal government. Such costs include those related to recipient participation in workfare, up to \$25 per month for any participant, as indicated in paragraph (f)(4) of this section. Such costs shall not include the costs of equipment, capital expenditures, tools or materials used in connection with the work performed by workfare participants, the costs of supervising workfare participants, the costs of reimbursing participants for meals away from home, or reimbursed expenses in excess of \$25 per month for any participant.

(2) *Funding mechanism.* The State agencies shall have responsibility for disbursing Federal funds used for the workfare program through the State agencies' Letters of Credit. The State agency shall also assure that records are being maintained which support the financial claims being made to FNS. This will be for all programs, regardless of who submits the plan. Mechanisms for funding local political subdivisions which have submitted

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plans must be established by the State agencies.

(3) *Fiscal recordkeeping and reporting requirements.* Workfare-related costs shall be identified by the State agency on the Financial Status Report (Form SF-269) as a separate column. All financial records, supporting documents, statistical records, negotiated contracts, and all other records pertinent to workfare program funds shall be maintained in accordance with § 277.12.

(4) *Sharing workfare savings—(i) Entitlement.* A political subdivision is entitled to share in the benefit reductions which occur when a workfare participant begins employment while participating in workfare for the first time, or within thirty days of ending the first participation in workfare.

(A) To begin employment means to appear at the place of employment and to begin working.

(B) First participation in workfare means performing work for the first time in a particular workfare program. The only break in participation which shall not end first participation shall be due to the participant's taking a job which does not affect the household's allotment by an entire month's wages and which is followed by a return to workfare.

(ii) *Calculating the benefit reductions.* The political subdivision shall calculate benefit reductions from each workfare participant's employment as follows.

(A) Unless the political subdivision knows otherwise, it shall presume that the benefit reduction equals the difference between the last allotment issued before the participant began the new employment and the first allotment which reflects a full month's wages, earned income deduction, and dependent care deduction attributable to the new job.

(B) If the political subdivision knows of other changes besides the new job, which affect the household's allotment after the new job began, the political subdivision shall obtain the first allotment affected by an entire month's wages from the new job. The political subdivision shall then recalculate the allotment to account for the wages, earned income deduction, and dependent care deduction attributable to the

new job. In recalculating the allotment the political subdivision shall also replace any TANF grant received after the new job with the one received in the last month before the new job began. The difference between the first allotment that accounts for the new job and the recalculated allotment shall be the benefit reduction.

(C) The political subdivision's share of the benefit reduction is three times this difference, divided by two.

(D) If, during these procedures, an error is discovered in the last allotment issued before the new employment began, that allotment shall be corrected before the savings are calculated.

(iii) *Accounting.* The reimbursement from workfare shall be reported and paid as follows:

(A) The political subdivision shall report its enhanced reimbursement to the State agency in accordance with paragraph (g)(3) of this section.

(B) The Food and Nutrition Service shall reimburse the political subdivision in accordance with paragraph (g)(2) of this section.

(C) The political subdivision shall, upon request, make available for review sufficient documentation to justify the amount of the enhanced reimbursement.

(D) The Food and Nutrition Service shall reimburse only the political subdivision's reimbursed administrative costs in the fiscal year in which the workfare participant began new employment and which are acceptable according to paragraph (g)(1) of this section.

(h) *Coordination with other workfare-type programs.* State agencies and political subdivisions may operate workfare programs as provided in this section jointly with a workfare program operated under Title IV of the Social Security Act to the extent that provisions and protections of the statute are maintained or with other workfare programs operated by the subdivision to the extent that the provisions and protections of this section are maintained. Statutory provisions include, but are not limited to, eligible recipients as provided in paragraph (e)(1) of this section, maximum hours of work per week as provided in paragraph (f)(2)(i) of this

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section and the penalty for noncompliance as provided in paragraph (f)(6)(i) of this section. When a household receives benefits from more than one program with a workfare requirement and the household is determined to have a food stamp workfare obligation, the food stamp obligation may be combined with the obligation from the other program. However, this may be done only to the extent that eligible food stamp workfare participants are not required to work more than 30 hours a week in accordance with paragraph (f)(2)(i) of this section. Any intent to coordinate programs should be described in the plan. Waivers of provisions in this section, for the purpose of operating workfare jointly with local general assistance workfare-type programs may be requested and provided in accordance with § 272.3(c). Statutory provisions, shall not be waived.

(i) *Voluntary workfare program.* State agencies and political subdivisions may operate workfare programs whereby participation by food stamp recipients is voluntary. In such a program, the penalty for failure to comply as provided in paragraph (f)(6) of this section shall not apply for noncompliance. The amount of hours to be worked will be negotiated between the household and the operating agency, though not to exceed the limits provided under paragraph (f)(2) of this section. In addition, all protections provided under paragraph (f)(2) of this section shall continue to apply. Those State agencies and political subdivisions choosing to operate such a program shall indicate in their workfare plan how their staffing will adapt to anticipated and unanticipated levels of participation. The Department will not approve plans which do not show that the benefits of the workfare program, in terms of hours worked by participants and reduced food stamp allotments due to successful job attainment, are expected to exceed the costs of such a program. In addition, if the Department finds that an approved voluntary program does not meet this criteria, the Depart-

ment reserves the right to withdraw approval.

[Amdt. 217, 47 FR 44697, Oct. 8, 1982, as amended by Amdt. 240, 48 FR 1173, Jan. 11, 1983; Amdt. 269, 51 FR 10793, Mar. 28, 1986, 53 FR 31646, Aug. 19, 1988; Amdt. 356, 59 FR 29713, June 9, 1994]

### § 273.23 Simplified application and standardized benefit projects.

(a) *General.* This subpart establishes rules under which Simplified Application and Standardized Benefit Projects shall operate. State agencies and political subdivisions chosen as project operators may designate households containing members receiving TANF, SSI, or Medicaid benefits as project eligible. Project eligible households shall have their food stamp eligibility determined using simplified application procedures. Food stamp eligibility shall be determined using information contained in their TANF, or Medicaid application, or, in the case of SSI, on the State Data Exchange (SDX) tape, and any appropriate addendum. Project-eligible households shall be considered categorically food stamp resource eligible based on their eligibility for these other programs and shall be required to meet food stamp income eligibility standards. However, income definitions appropriate to the TANF, SSI or Medicaid programs shall be used instead of food stamp income definitions in determining eligibility. In addition, such households shall, as a condition of program eligibility, meet and/or fulfill all food stamp nonfinancial eligibility requirements. (Project-eligible households defined as categorically eligible in § 273.2 (j) and (k) of these regulations are not required to meet the income eligibility standards.) To further simplify program administration, benefits provided to such households may be standardized by category of assistance and household size.

(b) *Program administration.* (1) Simplified application and standardized benefit procedures are applicable in five States and five political subdivisions. For the purpose of this section, a political subdivision is a project area